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ABSTRACT

Mandated by the Education Amendments of 1978 as part of a set of studies on the federal role in financing education, this study reports the results of over 100 interviews with practitioners and policy-makers in education. The topic is education finance issues. Identified as the foremost educational problem today and in the future was the financing of elementary and secondary education, especially its adequacy. Most respondents favored increased funding. Respondents were unanimous in their opinion that federal education policies have affected educational decision-making at the state, local, and school levels, and they cited both positive and negative results of federal interventions. The tendency of federal programs to increase staffing levels was noted. In general, the respondents felt that federal programs did provide needed services, but were often accompanied by restrictive paperwork. Except for respondents associated with private schools, most did not favor new federal policies for private schools, such as vouchers or tuition tax credits. The federal role in elementary and secondary education to date was viewed favorably by national level respondents, but state and local level respondents dwelt more on the negative aspects of federal involvement. (Author/JM)

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Opinion Survey

A Planning Study Conducted by the School Finance Project

Working Paper

February 1981

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February	Working Paper	Opinion Survey: A Planning Study Conducted by the School Finance Project
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March	Working Paper	Selected Papers in School Finance: 1981

Opinion Survey

A Planning Study Conducted by the School Finance Project

Working Paper

February 1981

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APPRECIATION

The School Finance Project staff, responsible for conducting this survey, wishes to express appreciation to the persons who gave so generously of their time for this activity. Those interviewed were not only extremely gracious and hospitable, but also provided knowledgeable responses that reflected the attention they have given these issues over the years. There are many thoughtful critics of education, and hearing their views and ideas was extremely valuable to us. We are grateful for their help.

A special note of thanks is due Jeffrey A. Owings of the National Center for Education Statistics for the assistance he provided in the computer analysis of the survey results. Without his help, the results would not have received a thorough examination and some dimensions of the work would certainly have been lost.

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OPINION SURVEY

WORKING PAPER

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In Section 1203 of the Education Amendments of 1978, Congress mandated several studies on financing public and private[1/] elementary and secondary education in the United States. These studies were intended to assist the Congress in the reconsideration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which expires in 1983, and in the formulation of legislative and executive branch positions on legislation related to school finance. The major issue to be addressed by this set of studies is the nature of the Federal role in financing elementary and secondary education, both public and private, over the next decade.

The School Finance Project was organized to conduct these studies. One of the Project's initial planning activities was to solicit opinions on education finance issues from a variety of respondents. To do so, the Project staff conducted over 100 interviews with practitioners and policymakers in education. The firsthand information about views on school finance and related issues was intended to aid the Project staff both in the designing of studies and, subsequently, in reporting study findings.

This report summarizes individual impressions collected by the Project staff over a five month period in 1980. Those interviewed held a variety of positions of influence in education and reflected among other factors: diversity in geographic location; national, state or local affiliation; and public or private school involvement.[2/] This diversity was of particular value because the respondents cannot be considered as a representative national sample, due to size and method of selection.

Respondent replies to the open-ended survey questions were categorized and tabulated to produce the tables discussed in the text. Where appropriate, this information was supplemented with anecdotal material to provide further explanation of the respondents' viewpoints.

This report has been prepared to give those who generously participated in these discussions an accounting of the results. The report will also be used internally by the School Finance Project staff in specifying the research tasks to be performed and as background information for preparation of reports to Congress.

[1/] Throughout this Working Paper, "private education" is used as the generic term for non-public education and includes parochial, other sectarian and non-church related schools.

[2/] See Appendix A for the definitions of the respondent categories and Appendix B for the distribution of respondents by category.

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Generally, this Opinion Survey produced results that are comparable to those obtained from larger and in some cases more representative polls asking similar questions.[3/] In some instances, the new questions on the survey produced unexpected answers and in others confirmation of expected responses. In total, the responses reflected a surprising similarity in thinking despite differences in geographic location and type of involvement in education. Differences that did occur are mentioned, but were not as prevalent as anticipated. The following paragraphs summarize the survey findings. A complete discussion of the results is presented in the next section.

FUNDING AND DISTRIBUTION

As anticipated, respondents were concerned about the financing of elementary and secondary education and ranked it as the foremost problem in education today and a continuing problem in the future. Within the area of funding, they were most concerned about the adequacy of funding and whether there would be sufficient revenues to provide the type of education services necessary for diverse student populations. The equity of financing schools was of considerably less importance to most respondents than the problem of adequacy, although national level respondents expressed greater concern on this issue than other respondents. A majority of respondents favored increased funding for elementary and secondary education; those in the Southeast were most supportive of this idea. Respondents identified Federal and state aid as the preferred sources for increases, while many respondents, especially those in the West, wanted local support to remain about the same.

MANAGEMENT

Respondents were unanimous in their opinion that Federal education policies have affected educational decision making at the state, local and school levels, and they cited both positive and negative results stemming from Federal intervention. The tendency of Federal programs to increase staffing levels was noted as being particularly pronounced. Many respondents showed a surprising willingness to consider various ways of managing Federal programs, such as Federal funds flowing through the states, directly to local education agencies, and directly to community based organizations. This was consistent with their general interest in looking for creative solutions to problems related to funding and in providing the best possible services to the students they serve.

[3/]Other polls included for comparison were those by Gallup, Phi Delta Kappan, PROBE, Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, and the Education Commission of the States. See References for a description of these polls.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In general, respondents were positively disposed toward the programmatic results of Federal programs and felt that these programs did provide needed services to special student populations. Respondents noted, however, that targeted programs often have restrictive regulations that reduce program flexibility and coordination, and result in excessive paperwork. As might be predicted, many respondents identified the gifted and talented as a group that was inadequately served. For students participating in Federal programs, the majority of the respondents thought that these programs complemented the students' overall education. But when questioned about the impact of Federal policies on services to nonparticipating students, more respondents cited negative effects than positive effects. Respondents strongly endorsed the view that the effects of Federal programs on all students in a school are very dependent on the way these programs are implemented at the school level.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Most respondents did not favor new Federal policies and strategies for private schools. The exceptions were those respondents directly associated with private school interests who strongly supported the need for and desirability of such policies and strategies. Specifically, the strategies of using vouchers and tuition tax credits were not favored as alternative financial support systems, although respondents from the West were not as opposed to these alternatives as respondents elsewhere.

FEDERAL ROLE

The Federal role in elementary and secondary education to date was viewed favorably by national level respondents, while state and local level respondents dwelt more on the negative aspects of Federal involvement. In terms of implementing the Federal role, national level respondents preferred categorical grants; state and local level respondents preferred consolidated financial aid. Unexpectedly, unfunded service mandates (such as civil rights requirements) were favored by one-third of the respondents, while only one-third were adamantly opposed to such mandates and the remaining third believed the Federal Government should help to fund compliance activities. Respondents also reacted favorably to Federal involvement in intra-state equalization, but few respondents wanted the Federal Government to try to equalize education financing among the states.

Overall, the respondents voiced a strong belief in the potential of education to act as a mitigating factor in solving current social problems facing the nation. The respondents were committed to the idea of local control and felt that most problems are best handled closest to the source of the problem. But they also recognized the past benefits and potential promise of Federal involvement, and argued that future Federal roles should be responsive to local and state differences.

CHAPTER II: RESULTS OF THE OPINION SURVEY

The Opinion Survey was designed to provide the School Finance Project staff with a perspective on the views of people who could be expected to be knowledegable on school finance issues. To provide this information the staff interviewed 107 policymakers and education practitioners in nine jurisdictions, selected to provide diversity in geographic location, size, wealth, and other factors.[4/] The survey used a free response format to elicit the information which was then coded, tabulated, and analyzed to produce this paper.

The more significant results of the Opinion Survey are described in detail in this chapter. The survey questions are used as subheadings throughout the text under the topical headings: General Context, Funding and Distribution, Management, Educational Programs, Private Schools, and the Federal Role. To show the major differences that emerged among participant subgroups, tabulations of categorized responses are presented, and supplemented with anecdotal material. Differences, where these exist, are reported for respondents by level (national, state, and local); region (Northeast, Southeast, Central, and West); and practitioner/policymaker.[5/] Where there are no differences among subgroups, the figures are not included. Thus for some questions, tabulations are reported only for "all respondents" and for other questions only for one or two of the respondent subgroups.

For all questions, tables are used primarily to illustrate the range of responses. Since the "no response" and "other response" categories are omitted, none of the response totals sum to 100 percent. Also, many of the questions allowed for multiple answers, thus on these questions the total responses may exceed 100 percent. Questions that were worded to elicit agreement or disagreement with a specific issue often were answered in the affirmative, but with reservations; the abbreviation used in the tables for agreement with reservations is "Res." For those persons interested in the actual responses given for each question, the complete tabulations for all categories used in the analysis are available at the School Finance Project.

[4/] See Appendix A for the definitions of respondent categories.
[5/] See Appendix B for the distribution of the respondents by category.

GENERAL CONTEXT

How important is the issue of funding in education? To address this question, the survey asked respondents to indicate their assessment of current and anticipated problems in education, and their specific concerns regarding funding.

Q: WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION TODAY?

	Funding	Public Attitude	Curriculum	Student Issues	Governance
All Respondents	75%	51%	50%	41%	31%
National	84%	63%	47%	42%	11%
State	76%	34%	58%	32%	45%
Local	70%	58%	44%	48%	28%

The survey began with a broad question intended to assess respondents' views on the importance of funding in elementary and secondary education. Most, but not all, respondents said that one aspect or another of funding was a problem. Differences between policymakers' and practitioners' responses to this question were negligible. However, national level respondents were more inclined to mention the funding issue than were the state level respondents, who in turn mentioned it more frequently than the local level respondents.

The high degree of identification of the funding issue did not seem extraordinary given the source of the inquiry (the School Finance Project) and the similarity of responses on other surveys. For instance, although the Gallup Poll with a related question ranked "lack of proper financial support" fourth among problems (Gallup, 1980), the same question asked of professional educators, as represented by Phi Delta Kappa members (Elam, 1980) and school superintendents (Duea, 1980), ranked funding as the foremost problem. Since the School Finance Project Opinion Survey interviewed only those persons closely associated with education, the results of this survey are more comparable with the results from polls of professional educators.

Respondents raised additional problems similar to those identified in other polls, including public attitude toward education (such as lack of public confidence, diminishing public trust and interest in education, and lack of credibility of the educational system) and problems associated with students (such as discipline and motivation). National and local level respondents mentioned public attitude problems more frequently than did state level respondents, but the latter showed a high concern for governance problems that was not reflected in the responses of others surveyed.

When asked about anticipated problems, most respondents predicted that present problems would continue, because these problems will take a long time to resolve.

Q: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS IN THE FINANCING OF SCHOOLS TODAY?

	Adequacy	Equity
All Respondents	89%	60%
National	100%	89%
State	103%	74%
Local	74%	38%

Asked more specifically about the financing of schools, the respondents most frequently identified problems associated with the adequacy of funding. Within this area, insufficient funding and dependence on the local property tax were mentioned most often. Local level respondents were not as concerned with adequacy of funding as were the national and state respondents. Adequacy also was found to rank as most important on the ECS Questionnaire, where the issue of level of state support received more mention "than any other issue included in the entire questionnaire" (Odden, 1980, p.41).

The issue of equity was the next most frequently mentioned problem and was cited more often by those at the national level than by those at the local level. The concern with equity on the part of the national level respondents may reflect the importance this issue assumes in Washington. Many of the programs and policies administered by the U.S. Department of Education were designed to promote equality of educational opportunity, and the efforts of the Department in this area are well known through such major programs as Title I for the disadvantaged, and P.L. 94-142 for the handicapped. The less frequent identification of equity as a problem by local level respondents was consistent with findings from the Gallup and Phi Delta Kappan polls. In these polls, equity was virtually ignored as a priority when lay and professional persons were asked about the functions of the U.S. Department of Education (Elam, 1980).

As for potential future problems in the financing of schools, respondents once again indicated that they expected the same problems previously mentioned to continue in the future.

Reducing the multiple responses to the two previous broad questions into only a few categories eliminated much of the flavor of the interviews. But many of the respondents took this opportunity to express their uncertainties about the current financial status of the schools and their concern that things might become worse before they improve. The following dilemmas — paraphrased and combined from respondents' comments — summarize the conflicts that were identified in response to these two questions:

- How to provide ever increasing services to more target groups at a time of fiscal restraint without reducing the educational program for the average child;
- How to compete successfully for public sector dollars when school populations are declining and the number of elderly increasing;
- How to deal with inflation and rapidly increasing energy costs within restrictive school budgets;
- How to give local taxpayers relief without surrendering control over public schools to the state and Federal bureaucracies;
- How to insure equitable and adequate educational programs to all students without excessive and burdensome rules and regulations;
- How to attract and retain quality teachers when salaries are low and teaching jobs scarce;
- How to provide equitable treatment to families with children in the private schools without undermining the system of public education;
- How to increase public confidence in the schools at a time when the schools are asked to do more, are given insufficient funds to do the job, and are hampered by so many regulations that they cannot do what they know should be done;
- How to recapture leadership and a sense of purpose in the public schools when parents are seeking other alternatives for their children, and the taxpayers are unwilling to bear the increasing costs.

Despite the magnitude of these problems, the persons interviewed did not give the impression of despair. They felt that although these are not the best of times, there are potential solutions and creative remedies that can be tried. Respondents reflected a basic faith in the benefits of education, which is also evidenced in the Gallup professional poll (Elam, 1980) and in the ACIR poll (ACIR, 1980), and a willingness to assist in finding the needed answers. Many of the respondents saw the Federal Government as an important partner in this search.

FUNDING AND DISTRIBUTION

Having determined the general concerns that occurred to people when the issue of funding was first raised, the survey probed for opinions about the desired level of funding and the responsibility each level of government should bear in providing funds. This set of questions looked more closely at levels of funding and distributional issues in order to identify the respondents' ideas about ways improvements could be made.

Q: DO YOU THINK THAT THE PRESENT AMOUNT BEING SPENT FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IS ABOUT RIGHT, OR WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IT INCREASED OR DECREASED?

	Increase	Same	Decrease
All Respondents	55%	32%	3%
Southeast	78%	13%	0%
Other Regions	46%	40%	5%

Not surprisingly, a majority of the respondents felt that the amount being spent for elementary and secondary education should be increased. The reasons given for needing additional funding included inflation, the provision of better services, and the expansion of particular programs or educational levels. Another sizeable respondent group thought that the amount being spent was about right and should remain the same (though many of the respondents added that redistribution of the amount might be in order). Only a few respondents wished to see school spending decreased.

More respondents from the Southeast than those in other regions were interested in increased funding for elementary and secondary schools. It should be noted that in the Southeast the spending for education has traditionally been lower than in other sections of the nation. For example, the per pupil expenditure for the two Southeast states with respondents in the survey averaged $1,506 per pupil in comparison with $2,002 per pupil for the nation in 1977-78 (NCES, 1980, p.78). A similar finding was reported for the ECS Questionnaire: financing basic education was a relatively important concern in the South where expenditure levels and teacher salaries have been low (Odden, 1980, p.42).

Despite respondents' preference for increased or level funding for elementary and secondary education, certain concerns were expressed relative to funding levels. In the eyes of one respondent, education was seen as a "primary concern and everyone would like maximum dollars; but since there is always a limit on the dollars available, what is 'adequate' must be balanced against what there is to spend." Another respondent felt strongly that "the amount needed to remain the same, but should be allocated according to a theory of how educational goals are to be met and audited to show efficiency of return." The level of spending was not perceived to be as important as the manner in which the money is allocated according to one respondent, who said that there has been a "national tradition of throwing money at problems without proper planning or accountability." Prior to examining the question of the need for increased funding, an association director expressed concern for determining the point of diminishing returns of added expenditures for education, and felt that until it is known how "education services are improved with each new dollar," it is difficult to decide where funds should be placed to do the most good.

Q: SHOULD THERE BE ANY SHIFTS IN THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PAY FOR EDUCATION COSTS (BETWEEN FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS)?

	Favored Increased Federal Aid	Favored Increased State Aid	Favored Same Local Support
All Respondents	49%	36%	27%
Northeast	70%	24%	15%
Southeast	56%	43%	26%
Central	30%	50%	10%
West	36%	32%	59%
National	26%	37%	21%
State	58%	61%	24%
Local	50%	14%	32%

In terms of the funding sources for education, respondents were asked whether the responsibility at the three levels of government, which at present share these costs, should be shifted. The most frequent set of responses was that Federal support should be increased, state support should be increased, and local support should remain the same. About one-third of those questioned responded by making reference to the Federal share, but said nothing about the state and local shares. Again, this may have been in anticipation of what the respondents thought was of interest to the School Finance Project interviewers.

Respondents in the Northeast and Southeast more frequently favored increased Federal funding than did those in the Central and Western regions. As it happens, states in the Northeast and Southeast regions tend to have higher levels of Federal aid than do states in the Central and Western regions. Increased state aid was favored both by respondents in the Southeast (for the two states with respondents in the survey, state aid is proportionately higher than in other states) and in the Central region (where state aid for the one state with respondents is proportionately lower)(NCES, 1980). Respondents from the West were the greatest advocates of local support remaining the same, which may reflect events in that region aimed at curtailing local tax revenues.

State level respondents were the most interested in having the Federal and state governments assume a greater responsibility for education costs. The national level respondents expressed only mild preference for increasing Federal and state support. Local respondents favored increasing Federal support, keeping local support at the same level, and many failed to mention state support at all.

* * * * * *

As might be predicted, the majority of the respondents were interested in seeing the amount available for elementary and secondary school spending increased and having the Federal level and to a lesser extent the state level assume greater responsibilities for these costs.

MANAGEMENT

One of the common complaints leveled against Federal programs is that the rules and regulations which accompany these programs make it difficult to manage and deliver services efficiently and effectively. Among the responses to the general context question about important problems in the financing of schools, "inflexible guidelines," "strings tied to Federal programs," and "lack of efficiency" were cited as drawbacks to current Federal programs and policies.

Q: HOW HAVE FEDERAL EDUCATION POLICIES AFFECTED EDUCATION DECISIONS MADE AT THE STATE, LOCAL, AND SCHOOL LEVEL?

	Substantially	Some	Little	No Effect
All Respondents	42%	28%	13%	0%

The survey sought to determine the degree to which respondents believed that Federal education policies affected the decisions made at the state, local, and school levels. Four of every ten respondents thought that the effects of Federal policies had been substantial, and cited examples of how Federal education policies shaped state and local decision making. The examples included:

- Redirection of local funds to meet the requirements of underfunded or unfunded Federal programs.
- Greater awareness of and program offerings for special need students.
- Necessity for more staff, particularly administrators.
- Expansion of opportunities for parental participation.
- Adoption of similar state laws.
- Redirection of funds to meet comparability requirements.

Another group of respondents thought that Federal policies had some impact, and only a few thought the effects of these policies were small. There were no respondents who thought that Federal education policies had not influenced local decision making in some way, and many felt these effects were too extensive, considering the amount of Federal money for elementary and secondary education.

A state level respondent who was sensitive to this issue said that the states "cannot make effective education decisions, because they are so concerned about compliance (with Federal requirements) and getting sued." Another responded with the opinion that "Federal policy is very directive and very threatening, because of loss of funds." "Federal policymakers," he said, "make decisions for you — taking decision making capabilities away from the state." In reference to staffing, one respondent felt that Federal policies had built "dynasties at the state level, and that these staffs see only the needs of their particular programs," while another felt that administrative personnel at the state level had increased, as had the program staff at the local level, but that these increases had been beneficial overall.

Q: MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS MAY BE SET UP IN DIFFERENT WAYS. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT —

	FEDERAL FUNDING THROUGH STATES?			FEDERAL FUNDING DIRECTLY TO LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES?			FEDERAL FUNDING DIRECTLY TO COMMUNITY ORG.?		
	Pro	Res	Anti	Pro	Res	Anti	Pro	Res	Anti
All Respondents	63%	20%	11%	45%	25%	17%	29%	21%	36%
National	68%	25%	5%	53%	21%	26%	42%	16%	26%
State	82%	8%	8%	29%	42%	21%	24%	21%	42%
Local	46%	26%	16%	62%	14%	10%	28%	22%	36%
Practitioners	66%	17%	9%	43%	25%	21%	26%	21%	40%
Policymakers	59%	22%	13%	54%	26%	13%	31%	20%	33%

Note: Res = Reservations, usually with affirmative responses.

To determine the preferred management arrangement for Federal educational programs, the respondents were asked about three possible approaches:

1. Federal funding through the states with shared Federal and state administrative responsibilities;

2. Direct grants from the Federal Government to local education agencies; and

3. Funding of community based organizations and other non-governmental agencies to provide educational services.

The large majority expressed a positive reaction, though sometimes with reservations, for the flow of Federal funds through the states. State level respondents were most favorably disposed toward this option and local respondents least supportive. Some respondents mentioned the potential for improving coordination under this approach, i.e., with both Federal and state programs handled by the same agency, the possiblities for gaps and overlaps are reduced.

Nonetheless, respondents as a total group reacted almost as favorably to the approach of having Federal funds go directly to local education agencies. The greatest support for this approach came from local level respondents, while state level respondents were only half as supportive and voiced greater reservations about providing funds directly to the local level.

Although direct Federal funding to community based organizations for providing educational services was the least favored alternative, this approach still received a surprisingly high positive response, given the types of respondents who were included in the survey. Federal level respondents were the strongest supporters of this approach.

The high marks given all three alternatives indicated a willingness to consider a range of possible approaches. However, state and local respondents expressed a clear preference for Federal funds to come directly to their own level of administration. Policymakers seemed particularly open-minded about the use of alternative types of management approaches. Respondents in general supported the idea of examining individual programs and selecting the most appropriate routing for the funds, based on a program's specific purposes and requirements.

* * * * * *

Respondents universally agreed that Federal programs do have an effect on state, local, and school level decision making. However, different respondents questioned the range and desirability of these effects. Many of the usual complaints and compliments about Federal programs emerged from the discussions. In addition, there was a surprising amount of interest by respondents in considering various alternative strategies for the channeling of Federal funds to program sites. Respondents agreed that a desirable goal is to secure a good match between program requirements and management strategies.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Federal education programs are seen by many people as a means of providing services to meet the needs of special target groups. By identifying some students for special attention, the entire system is affected — sometimes for the better, sometimes not, according to the respondents. In this set of questions, the survey sought respondents' opinions on the effects Federal programs have had on school children, and whether these effects were perceived to be beneficial.

Q: MOST FEDERAL PROGRAMS TARGET FUNDS ON SPECIFIC GROUPS. WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THIS APPROACH?

	ADVANTAGES		DISADVANTAGES	
	Meet Special Needs	Generally Good	Restrictive Regulations	Paper Work
All Respondents	76%	15%	77%	14%

Most respondents felt that the targeted Federal programs were meeting the needs of certain groups, and that this was the most advantageous aspect of these programs. As respondents indicated, targeted programs "identify and serve, rather than ignore special need groups" and "make it more likely that funds will go for specific activities."

In terms of disadvantages, respondents perceived targeted programs as having restrictive regulations that reduced program flexibility. They believed these restrictions result in drawbacks such as:

- distorting "priorities at the state and local level";
- serving "only the identified client populations";
- "labeling children";
- increasing the difficulty of "the coordination of one program to another and special programs with the regular curriculum";
- making it "hard to revise and terminate programs"; and
- forcing districts "to spend money that would have been spent differently, if they had free choice."

Respondents also cited the burden of paperwork required for monitoring and auditing targeted programs. However, local level respondents (on whom this burden falls) did not mention this problem any more frequently than other respondents.

Q: IN YOUR OPINION ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL NEED GROUPS THAT ARE NOW NOT BEING ADEQUATELY SERVED?

	None	Gifted/ Talented	Average Child
All Respondents	21%	27%	19%

Because the Federal approach to date usually has been to serve special need groups, this question was asked to determine whether the respondents thought there were still groups that were unserved or underserved. The responses to the question were highly varied and many different groups were mentioned. However, a number of respondents felt that all special need groups were receiving adequate service. Of those groups identified as receiving less than adequate service, the gifted and talented and the average child were the only ones frequently mentioned. The identification of the gifted and talented group concurs with the findings of the ECS Questionnaire in which respondents ranked this group along with the handicapped as needing increased state support (Odden, 1980). As for the average child, one school principal expressed his particular concern about the "borderline average" child who is not ranked low enough to qualify for special programs and so may "fall though the cracks, eventually creating new problems."

The remaining responses for this question identified a variety of groups, including the handicapped, bilingual, refugee, immigrant, drop-out, vocational, and others. However, no single group received a significant number of the total responses.

Q: FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS, HOW WELL DO YOU THINK THESE SPECIAL PROGRAMS COMPLEMENT THEIR OVERALL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

	Well	Moderately Well	Not Well	Program Dependent
All Respondents	50%	14%	33%	12%
Practitioners	58%	13%	32%	11%
Policymakers	41%	15%	33%	13%

Q: DO YOU THINK EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO THE NON-PARTICIPATING STUDENTS ARE AFFECTED BY FEDERAL POLICIES? IF SO, HOW?

	No Effect	Positive Effect	Negative Effect
All Respondents	15%	25%	40%
Practitioners	9%	30%	45%
Policymakers	20%	20%	35%

The respondents were also asked to discuss the complementary nature of Federal programs with regular school programs. This discussion involved two perspectives: the way Federal programs for special students mesh with the overall program and the effect of Federal policy on the remainder of the school program. The majority of the respondents thought that for the students participating in Federal education programs, these programs complemented their overall education either well or moderately well. One Federal employee added that he did not view the Federal programs as different from the overall program, but that these programs have "merely expanded the range of options available to the child to see that the child has a program oriented to his needs." One-third of the respondents thought that Federal programs were not a good complement to the overall educational program, while several respondents felt that the degree of compatibility varied widely from district to district or was dependent on the individual school. Respondents who questioned the complementary nature of Federal programs for targeted pupils cited such difficulties as the following.

> "Special problems can be created for the whole classroom when severe problem students are mainstreamed."
>
> "Pull-out programs work as a disadvantage for all kids."
>
> "Federal rules and regulations, such as the prohibition against the commingling of funds, do not encourage complementary programs."
>
> "Emphasis is on guarding the dollars for (special) programs, not on education."

Practitioners, who work directly with the programs, were more inclined to respond that the Federal programs were a good complement to the overall program than were policymakers.

More respondents perceived negative effects than positive effects when questioned about the impact of Federal policies on educational services to non-participating students. On the negative side, respondents worried that non-participating students often lose out because "compliance requirements pull resources from regular kids to support mandated programs." In the words of one Federal employee, funds needed to comply with Federal mandates "come from people's hides, spread people thinner, and burn out people at the expense of the average child." The extra burden placed on the regular classroom teacher by the mainstreaming of handicapped children and the problems associated with the labeling of students and pull-out programs were also mentioned as negative results of Federal programs that affect all students.

The supportive effects of Federal policies on all educational services were referred to by one respondent as the "gracious overflow." The provision of supplementary services that broaden the perspective of all classroom teachers, reduce pupil/teacher ratios in classrooms when special students are pulled out, and decrease competition for materials and equipment were all seen as positive, though indirect, results of Federal programs.

Practitioners, who have greater opportunities to view the programs in operation, were more inclined than policymakers to think that Federal programs have had an effect on non-participating students. Practitioners rated these effects both as more positive and more negative than did the policymakers.

* * * * * * * * *

In general, the respondents were favorably disposed toward Federal education programs. They did, however, express the feeling that these programs had both "some pluses and some minuses," and did not always agree on their assessment of how certain aspects of the programs qualified. For instance, pull-out programs were used by different respondents as both a positive and negative example of a Federal program technique. There was agreement on this point: the effects of Federal programs on all students in a school are very dependent on the way these programs are implemented at the school level.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS[6/]

The authorizing legislation for the School Finance Project studies included specific concern for private education. Therefore, private school personnel were sought as respondents for this survey, and questions about Federal policy for private schools were asked of all respondents.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FEDERAL POLICY OUGHT TO BE TOWARD PRIVATE SCHOOLS?

	No Federal Policy	Limited within Legal Constraints	Guarantee Services to All Children	Current Funding
All Respondents	38%	20%	10%	8%
Practitioners	34%	13%	9%	13%
Policymakers	43%	26%	11%	6%
Private School Personnel	0%	12%	75%	0%
Other Respondents	41%	20%	6%	9%

The most frequent responses to the question about Federal policy toward private schools were in the category of having no Federal policy in this area. More policymakers than practitioners offered this response, but no private school respondents chose this option. One national association director who believed that Federal policies should ignore the private sector said, "Federal policy should be hands-off. Religious organizations don't want funding; as they know, or should know, that it comes with too many strings." The most prevalent thinking on the part of those opposed to a Federal private school policy was that "if parents make this choice (private schools), they know it will require more resources." A slight variation on this theme, expressed by several people, was that because the poor cannot select the option of private education, there should be Federal support for poor children to attend private schools but not for affluent children.

Responses that could be interpreted as favoring the status quo as the best Federal policy in relation to private education ("limited role within legal contraints" and "current funding") were the next most frequently identified. Respondents indicated that changing policies, either increased or decreased Federal assistance and/or regulation of private schools, could raise strong political controversy which they were reluctant to see happen.

6/For all questions related to the private schools, the category of "private school personnel" was included in the tables. Because the number of people interviewed who were employed by private schools or by associations primarily concerned with representing the interests of private schools was small (only eight respondents), special caution should be exercised in reviewing and interpreting these results.

A point of view held by most of the private school respondents — and by almost none of the others — was that Federal policy should guarantee basic educational services to all children. This type of response was based on the "child benefit" theory. An example of this view was reflected by one Federal employee who said, "Federal policy should ensure that students in the non-public, as well as the public schools, be protected and guaranteed quality education and equal opportunities." Some respondents felt that Federal service guarantees would place more requirements on the private schools, but others felt that they would provide more assistance from the Federal Government.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THE FOLLOWING EXISTING OR PROPOSED FEDERAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES — TUITION TAX CREDITS AND VOUCHERS?

	TUITION TAX CREDITS			VOUCHERS			
	Pro	Res	Anti	Pro	Res	Anti	Not Asked[7/]
All Respondents	19%	10%	65%	7%	12%	56%	20%
Northeast	18%	9%	70%	0%	12%	67%	18%
Southeast	17%	13%	61%	17%	17%	52%	9%
Central	30%	0%	60%	20%	0%	60%	0%
West	27%	14%	55%	0%	14%	41%	41%
National	5%	11%	79%	11%	11%	58%	21%
State	13%	18%	68%	0%	16%	66%	18%
Local	28%	4%	58%	12%	10%	48%	20%
Practitioners	23%	9%	58%	6%	15%	51%	19%
Policymakers	15%	11%	72%	9%	9%	61%	20%
Private School Personnel	75%	12%	12%	38%	25%	13%	25%
Other Respondents	14%	10%	70%	5%	11%	60%	19%

Note: Res = Reservations, usually with affirmative responses.

[7/] The original form of the survey did not include the question on vouchers and therefore, about one-fifth of the respondents were not asked about their views on this issue. In the West, where the early interviews were conducted, two-fifths of the respondents were not given the opportunity to voice their opinions on vouchers.

As would be expected, these questions provoked a strong divergence of opinion. Both the tuition tax credits and vouchers were opposed by a majority of the respondents, but, there were differences between the categories of respondents. Respondents in the West were the least negative about both tuition tax credits and vouchers, while the respondents in the Northeast had the most negative response to both.[8/] For the three levels, the negative response to tuition tax credits was greatest at the national level and least at the local level; state level respondents were the most negative on the voucher strategy. Practitioners were, as a group, less negative about tuition tax credits and vouchers then were policymakers. Those who opposed these strategies believed that tuition tax credits and vouchers were neither desirable nor imperative, and in the words of one respondent, "certainly not the business of the Federal Government."

One of the major problems identified with tuition tax credits by many people was that this approach "corrupts the revenue system, which should remain as neutral as one can achieve," and once in place, "tax credits are hard to dislodge." The problem of providing tax relief and thereby aid to the middle class was seen as a problem, as was the possibility of vouchers leading to a "full-scale bailout from the public schools by the affluent." Vouchers also drew criticism because they were thought to be "too costly if the level of funding for the poor was sufficient to provide equal access." One respondent commenting on vouchers said that a "society that cannot buy soap flakes intelligently can't buy education."

The negative response to the idea of tuition tax credits and vouchers echoed the results obtained on the ECS Questionnaire where the proposals of vouchers and credits as alternative state support systems for education were accorded the lowest ranking for any of the 24 school finance issues. In the words of the report, "Both tax credits and vouchers are unimportant among all respondents. Among the regions, the most interest in the use of vouchers is in the Far West" (Odden, 1980, p.37).

Private school personnel responded in a sharply different manner than did others who were interviewed; they strongly favored tuition tax credits and vouchers. In support of these strategies, advocates cited the inevitability of creating some type of direct aid to parents whose children attend private elementary and secondary schools. The director of one private school association typified this point of view saying, "We may be headed toward a voucher system because there is room for and need for choice, pluralism, and experimentation; anyway, 10 percent of the students are in the private schools and ought to be supported." One private school headmaster said, "If our schools are serving a public purpose, and the Supreme Court says we are, the Federal Government should come to the assistance of those who choose these schools."

[8/]The private school enrollment was above the national average (11 percent) in the two Northeastern states surveyed (18 percent), but below average (7 percent) in the three Western states (NCES, 1979, p.48).

* * * * * * * * *

Concerns about tuition tax credits and vouchers centered around the issues of equity and choice, but there were distinctively different views about the meaning of these terms. In terms of equity, the supporters of credits and vouchers were worried about the double financial burden for education on families with children in private schools. Those opposed were worried about providing tax relief to those who need it the least and endangering the public system by making it a dumping ground for students who could not be enrolled in private schools. Many of those who did not support the use of public funds for private schools believed, nevertheless, that there should be options in education, and these options should be available in both the public and private sectors. The supporters of tuition tax credits and vouchers believed that the Federal Government should promote choice through Federal assistance to the private sector.

FEDERAL ROLE

The mandated studies on school finance are intended to provide Congress with information useful for future policy deliberations on the Federal role. This issue was addressed directly in the Opinion Survey by asking respondents their perceptions of the Federal role and their reactions to some existing and proposed Federal strategies.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE FEDERAL ROLE IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION OVER THE LAST TWENTY YEARS?

	Aid to Special Populations	Control Through Funding
All Respondents	56%	56%
National	95%	47%
State	55%	61%
Local	42%	56%

Respondents most frequently perceived the Federal role over the last 20 years as strong, primarily providing aid to the special populations and resulting in Federal control through funding. For the most part, those at the national level perceived the Federal role as supportive of elementary and secondary education, while those at the state and local levels tended to comment on the negative aspects of Federal intervention. Respondents at the national level almost always mentioned the Federal emphasis on aid to special populations, while state and local respondents mentioned it only about half as often. The terms chosen by many state and local respondents to describe the Federal role included too much control for the amount of funding; too many strings attached to funds; attempting to solve local problems with Federal policies; and underfunded and unfunded Federal mandates.

Some respondents commented on their concept of the Federal role and the ways they had observed this role develop through the years in the following ways.

From the national perspective —

One Federal employee saw the Federal role as "responsive to perceived national interests and problems," and cited the National Defense Education Act as a response to the threat of the Soviet Union's advances in technology and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as part of the war on poverty.

Another thought that the "Federal role is to draw attention to important problems in society and to provide funds to cope with these problems. School systems now have to serve the total clientele and give a good faith effort to try to cope with the trouble spots identified by the Feds."

A national association director described the Federal role as one of "insuring access and trying to insure equity and to some extent quality." He went on to say that he was not sure this was the intended role, but that it was "not a bad Federal role, but too bad that it was accidental and not planned. Instead, programs were put into place and added up to this set of purposes."

Another saw the Federal role as basically one to "initiate programs in areas where the states have been negligent over the last 20 years."

A Congressional staffer viewed the Federal role as threefold: to support areas of national interest; to provide assistance to specific interest groups; and to perform research that transcends parochial concerns.

From the state and local perspective--

A state finance administrator thought that the "Federal Government should defend the shores and deliver the mail . . . and stay out of education."

Another state finance administrator saw the Federal role as the provision of funds to meet the needs of special target groups and stimulation of improvements by supplying seed money.

A legislative staff person thought that the Federal role was very helpful in equalizing educational opportunity, "particularly in states that did not have resources or were unwilling to spend them. But when they (the Federal Government) started mandating one kind of service and paying for another, the local burden became intolerable."

Another believed that "enormous amounts of money are spent without proper coordination or controls," and that they are "pouring money into the system and getting little in return."

A school principal believed that the Federal Government has "tried to solve long-range goals with short-range solutions" and did not feel that they have done a good job.

One local superintendent thought the primary role of the Federal Government is to serve as a catalyst.

A local school board member saw the Federal Government as the identifier of national priorities and the provider of incentives for districts to move in these directions.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION OUGHT TO BE IN THE FUTURE?

	More Flexible	Increased Aid	Weaker Role
All Respondents	50%	38%	18%
National	47%	47%	21%
State	45%	39%	29%
Local	54%	34%	8%

Questioned on the future Federal role in education, the greatest number of respondents answered in terms of creating Federal policy that would be more flexible at the local level, which is consistent with their assessment of the shortcomings of the current Federal role expressed in the previous question. National level respondents gave this answer almost as frequently as local level respondents. Increased Federal aid, including more aid to special populations, was the next most frequent response, with the national level respondents the strongest supporters of this idea. Preference for a diminution of the Federal role was expressed by a minority of respondents, but the local level respondents were less likely to voice this desire than were the state and national level respondents.

One respondent saw a "delicate balance between giving attention to special populations, addressing short-run national problems, and providing funding through a structure that provides for effective integration of Federal, state and local dollars." Respondents also suggested that the Federal Government establish priorities and standards, provide leadership, and discover and disseminate research results of use to practitioners. One respondent urged that there be no new Federal roles until the problems of equity and access are resolved.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THESE EXISTING OR PROPOSED FEDERAL STRATEGIES?

	CATEGORICAL GRANTS			CONSOLIDATED GRANTS			GENERAL AID		
	Pro	Res	Anti	Pro	Res	Anti	Pro	Res	Anti
All Respondents	45%	38%	13%	62%	25%	8%	50%	16%	26%
National	63%	32%	5%	53%	47%	0%	37%	26%	37%
State	50%	26%	18%	66%	26%	8%	61%	8%	32%
Local	34%	50%	12%	62%	16%	10%	46%	18%	18%

Note: Res = Reservations, usually with affirmative responses.

When asked to react to a series of Federal education strategies that either were in use or have been proposed as possibilities, the respondents favored consolidated grants over categorical grants or general aid. The pro responses when combined with the reservation responses into a single group yielded a preference for categorical grants about equal to that for consolidated grants. National level respondents most preferred categorical grants; state level respondents favored both consolidated grants and general aid; and local level respondents most preferred consolidated grants.

Some respondents thought that categorical grants have been beneficial and should be retained. In the words of one, "Given the current level of Federal funding, national priorities and interests, categorical funding should be the cornerstone of Federal participation in education." A more commonly expressed idea was that categorical grants were needed at the beginning, but now there should be more discretion at the state and local levels, particularly on the part of those which have shown themselves able and willing to provide for special interest groups. "Categoricals have had a role to play, but now it is time to move toward broader consolidated grants," said one state's chief school officer.

Respondents saw general aid as a political impossibility. Even if general aid were possible, some respondents worried that it might be used like general revenue sharing monies in supplanting local funds for education. Complete "control-free money" caused hesitation on the part of local administrators, because they said that they sometimes need Federal rules and regulations to do some of the things that they know should be done but that might be unpopular in their communities. State level respondents were particularly favorable to the idea of general aid, even though they were aware of the potential problems of this type of assistance.

In keeping with the respondents' views about the need for increased funding for elementary and secondary education, they also expressed positive reactions to the various forms of aid. All three of the suggested strategies received high marks from the respondents and only a few of the respondents reacted negatively to these possibilities.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO UNFUNDED SERVICE MANDATES?

	Pro	Res	Anti	If Required, Feds Pay
All Respondents	19%	16%	30%	32%
National	26%	21%	32%	16%
State	21%	24%	32%	24%
Local	14%	8%	28%	44%

Note: Res = Reservations, usually with affirmative responses.

Unfunded service mandates (described as "Federal requirements, generally associated with civil rights, which states or local agencies must carry out without accompanying Federal funds") provoked a strong response, and some respondents found them indefensible. Even so, a surprisingly high percentage (about one-third) gave a "positive" or with "reservations" reply.

For those persons favoring unfunded mandates, the requirements, particularly those associated with civil rights, seemed reasonable, and represented things that should be done without Federal intervention. For those respondents opposing unfunded service mandates, about equal numbers thought that these mandates should not be required or that if mandated, the Federal Government should pay the implementation costs of these requirements. Local level respondents were least supportive of unfunded service mandates and most strongly favored Federal payments for Federal requirements. In the words of an association director, "Unfortunately, unfunded service mandates cause backlash at the local level, and people lose sight of why these things are mandated. The ideas are good and necessary, but people dislike them because they must be funded with local dollars."

Q: WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO FEDERAL FUNDS FOR FINANCE EQUALIZATION AMONG DISTRICTS OP STATES?

AMONG DISTRICTS

	Pro	Res	Anti
All Respondents	52%	12%	27%
Northeast	61%	15%	21%
Southeast	74%	0%	13%
Central	30%	10%	40%
West	32%	18%	45%

AMONG STATES

	Pro	Res	Anti
ll Respondents	41%	12%	30%
National	32%	16%	47%
State	40%	8%	32%
Local	47%	14%	22%

Note: Res = Reservations, usually with affirmative responses.

Respondents also were asked whether the Federal Government should act as a financial equalizer to reduce disparities either among school districts or states. A majority of the respondents favored having the Federal Government assume greater responsibility for reducing such differences among districts. However, regions differed on this issue with respondents in the Northeast and the Southeast more than twice as supportive of this strategy as those in the Central and Western regions.[9/] Some respondents exhibited an interest in reform, irrespective of the level of government that would assume the responsibility for instituting reform. Others voiced the opinion that increased equalization among districts in their state could only be achieved through Federal

[9/]One out of the four states used in the Northeast and the Southeast was a financial reform state, while all four of the Central and Western states were categorized as reform states, according to the Education Commission of the States (Odden, 1980).

intervention. One generally expressed response to this question was that the Federal Government should offer encouragement, either financial or other types, for reducing intra-district disparities, but that the task of reducing these disparities is too delicate a task for the Federal Government and should be left to the states.

Less than half of the respondents thought the Federal Government should assume the responsibility for finance equalization among states. The national level respondents represented the strongest opposition to this strategy, perhaps because they are frequently exposed to the Washington point of view that sufficient Federal funds are not available for this purpose. Respondents cited as a major objection the difficulties in making such an operation work. In the words of one Federal employee, it is "potentially impossible (to equalize expenditures among states) given the amount of disparity among states, the cost-of-living differences, and the current governmental structure in education which is predicated on local decision making." Another concern was the problem of rewarding those states that have not made the effort and corresponding commitment to education, and in so doing, punish those who have. Separating the ability to support education from the willingness to support it was seen by some to be an insurmountable obstacle to reducing disparity. A Federal employee suggested if the Federal Government becomes involved in this task, the government should take steps to see that "the states' capacity to offer public services is not impaired" and that "education should stand in line with other public services, because to single out education for equalization is unreasonable."

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

As has been noted throughout this report, the survey produced results that are comparable to those obtained from larger and in some cases more representative polls, such as the ones conducted by Gallup, Phi Delta Kappan, the Education Commission of the States, the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, and other groups. These similarities add credence to the belief that the Opinion Survey results reflect the general reactions of people in the educational community to questions concerning the Federal role in education and school finance. Examples of the congruence between the responses reported in this paper and other surveys are:

- ** Professional educators ranked funding as the foremost problem in education today.
- ** The problem of adequate funding was of greatest concern among the possible problems related to financing.
- ** Professional educators favored increased spending for elementary and secondary education. Respondents in the Southeast particularly supported raising spending levels.
- ** The desirability of increasing state support to education was championed by state officials.
- ** A majority of professional educators believed that the effects of Federal programs have been positive.
- ** Increased support for gifted and talented students was favored.
- ** Vouchers and tuition tax credits were not highly regarded as alternative financing systems, but respondents in the West were considerably less negative about these alternatives than were respondents elsewhere.
- ** Commitment to the idea of local control was strong.
- ** Basic faith in education remained high for professional educators.

New results also emerged from this work, through questions that have not appeared on other surveys. Examples of these findings are:

- .. Greater interest was expressed about "adequacy" than about "equity" in the financing of schools. The national level respondents were the most concerned about equity, and the local level respondents the least concerned.
- .. While about half the respondents favored increasing the Federal share of education costs, state and local respondents were twice as supportive of this option as the national respondents.
- .. Increased Federal support was least favored by the respondents in the Central and Western regions and most favored by those in the Northeast and Southeast.

- Maintenance of current levels of local financial support was favored more strongly by respondents in the West than by those in other regions.

- Distribution of Federal funds for education programs through the states was the management approach most favored by respondents, but other options (Federal funds directly to local education agencies or community based organizations) received considerable positive support.

- State level respondents overwhelmingly preferred having Federal funds flow through the state (with shared administrative responsibilities with the state), while local level respondents expressed preference for direct Federal grants to local education agencies.

- Respondents classified as private school personnel supported the development of a Federal policy toward private schools, and tuition tax credits and vouchers considerably more strongly than did the remainder of the respondents.

- National level respondents perceived the Federal role as a supportive one, while state and local personnel perceived the Federal role more in terms of control.

- About one-third of the respondents favored or favored with reservations unfunded service mandates (such as civil rights requirements), while another third opposed such mandates outright, and the remaining third thought that if the Federal Government required such mandates, it should help fund the implementation costs.

- About half the respondents were interested in seeing the Federal Government assume part of the cost for equalizing finances among districts, but fewer respondents would like to see the Federal Government attempt to equalize among states.

- Respondents in the Northeast and Southeast were more than twice as supportive as those in the Central and Western regions of the idea of Federal intervention to reduce spending differences among districts.

- According to a majority of the respondents, any future Federal role should make allowances for increased flexibility on the part of practitioners.

APPENDICES AND REFERENCES

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS FOR RESPONDENT SUBCATEGORIES

REGION

States where interviews were conducted have been categorized into four regions using the geographical groupings devised by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Interviews conducted at the national level (both with Federal employees and national association personnel) were not categorized by region, but placed in a grouping labeled "none".

Region Title	Jurisdictions
Northeast	District of Columbia Pennsylvania Rhode Island
Southeast	Alabama South Carolina
Central	Wisconsin
West	California Texas Washington
None	

LEVEL

Persons interviewed were categorized by the level at which they served or the level at which their influence in education was the greatest. The national level included persons working for the Federal Government and in nationally based associations; the state level - those persons working for state government, serving on state boards of education, and representing state associations or organizations; and the local level - those persons working for municipal governments, serving on local boards of education, and working in schools.

POSITION TITLE

In selecting those to be interviewed, persons in ten different types of positions were included to provide variety and diversity in the approach to the issues. Although the results were not analyzed according to position because of the small number of persons in some groups, the groupings were used to separate the respondents into the "practitioner" and "policymaker" categories for reporting purposes. To understand these placements, definitions of the position titles are necessary and these are provided below.

TITLE	DEFINITION
Director	National association directors and project supervisors.
Chief Administrators	State commissioners, local superintendents, private school superintendents or their immediate staff.
Finance Administrators	State or local education agency administrators for school financial affairs.
Categorical Administrators	State education agency or local agency persons responsible for the administration of any one of the Federal programs, such as Title I, Education of the Handicapped, etc.
Principal	School principals in a public or private school.
Teacher	School teachers in a public or private school.
Education Board	State or local school board members.
Legislative	Federal, state or local officials elected to a legislative body or the staff for such a person or body.
Executive	Federal executive employees, governors' staff, and mayors or their staff.
Other	Persons not in the above categories.

PRACTITIONER/POLICYMAKER

Respondents were categorized according to the dichotomy of education practitioner and policymaker. Practitioners were defined as persons active in the delivery of educational services in elementary and secondary schools, and who responded to the survey questions in that capacity. All other respondents were classified as policymakers either because they were directly involved in that process or because their positions were very influential in shaping education policy. Essentially none of the persons interviewed could be considered as lay persons in the field of education. Using the ten position titles, the respondents were divided into practitioner and policymaker categories as follows:

Practitioners	Policymakers
Chief Administrator	Director
Finance Administrator	Education Board
Categorical Administrator	Legislative
Principal	Executive
Teacher	Other

PRIVATE SCHOOL PERSONNEL

For the purpose of looking at a few select questions, affiliation with private schools was considered a categorizing factor. Persons working in or administering private schools and those in associations primarily concerned with representing the interests of private schools were placed in the group titled "private school personnel", and all other respondents were placed in a second group.

APPENDIX B

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SUBCATEGORIES

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

RESPONDENTS BY REGION

REGION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Northeast	33	31%
Southeast	23	21%
Central	10	9%
West	22	21%
None[10/]	19	18%
TOTAL	107	100%

RESPONDENTS BY LEVEL

LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
National	19	18%
State	38	36%
Local	50	47%
TOTAL	107	101%

RESPONDENTS BY PRACTITIONER/POLICYMAKER

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Practitioner	53	50%
Policymaker	54	50%
TOTAL	107%	100%

10/ Persons interviewed at the national level were not categorized by region.

RESPONDENTS BY PRIVATE SCHOOLS/OTHERS

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Private Schools	8	7%
Others	99	3%
TOTAL	107	100%

RESPONDENTS BY SEX

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	70	65%
Female	37	35%
TOTAL	107	100%

RESPONDENTS BY RACE

RACE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
White	78	73%
Black	7	7%
Other	3	3%
Unrecorded	19	18%
TOTAL	107	101%

REFERENCES

Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. (ACIR). Changing public attitudes on governments and taxes: 1980. Washington, D.C.: Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 1980.

The ACIR survey was conducted as a personal interview research survey among a probability sampling of 2,025 persons in the continental United States. As a probability sample, the results may be projected to be representative of the nation as a whole. The survey consisted of five forced answer questions, used to gauge public opinion as to various tax instruments, Federal aid, and effectiveness of the levels of government. This survey is referred to as the ACIR Survey in the text of the SFP Opinion Survey Working Paper.

Duea, Jerry, and Bishop, Walter L. The PROBE results: Important differences in public and professional perceptions of the schools. Phi Delta Kappan, September 1980, 62, 50-52.

The PROBE survey, conducted by the Practical Research into Organizational Behavior and Effectiveness, an independent research organization at the University of Northern Iowa, was administered to 1,272 state and local superintendents in October and November of 1979. It was designed to parallel the 1979 Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Towards the Public Schools in its nature and scope of the questions and issues. Views were solicited from a stratified random sample of superintendents. Comparison with the Gallup Poll results revealed disparities between public and professional views of the problems facing schools today. This survey is referred to as the PROBE Survey in the text of the SFP Opinion Survey Working Paper.

Elam, Stanley M., and Gough, Pauline B. Comparing lay and professional opinion on Gallup Poll questions. Phi Delta Kappan, September 1980, 62, 47-48.

The 12th Annual Gallup Poll (see below) was administered to a sample of 202 Phi Delta Kappa members, all professional educators at the state and local levels, in May, 1980. The results of these questions are compared with the results of the Gallup Poll lay responses, and are summarized in this article. Some striking differences and many points of agreement are noted. This poll is referred to as the Phi Delta Kappan Poll in the text of the SFP Opinion Survey Working Paper.

Gallup, George H. The 12th Annual Gallup Poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, September 1980, 62, 33-46.

The Gallup Poll, an attitude survey administered to 1,547 lay persons in the Spring of 1980, was used to establish a source of reliable information concerning trends in opinion about significant school questions. The poll consisted of 23 questions, some openended, most forced choice. It was administered to people at both state and local levels. Its design was that of a modified probability sample to be representative of the nation as a whole. This poll is referred to as the Gallup Poll in the SFP Opinion Survey Work Paper.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Digest of education statistics 1979. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1979.

In Table 41 of the NCES Digest of Education Statistics, school enrollments, public and non-public, are listed by state. The original source of the data is the 1970 Census of Population, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Digest of education statistics 1980. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1980.

In Table 70 of the NCES Digest of Education Statistics, expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance in public elementary and secondary day schools is listed by State, 1977-78. The original source of the data is Revenue and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education, 1977-78, published by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Odden, Allan, and Augenblick, John. School finance reform in the states: 1980. Denver, Colorado: Education Finance Center, Education Commission of the States, 1980.

The ECS School Finance Issues Questionnaire was returned by 286 state policymakers, education personnel, and interest group representatives. It was a forced answer questionnaire, consisting of 36 questions, which in many cases asked the respondents to rank the relative importance of various issues in school finance in the coming decade. For comparative purposes, this survey is referred to as the ECS Questionnaire in the text of the SFP Opinion Survey Working Paper.

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